

Project USER: Initiation

by Ghost in the Machine13

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Summary: New players, bigger stakes, and the clock is ticking. New powerhouses will rise with agendas of their own. A sequel to Gods of Death. Taking place in the months before Winter Soldier and Lost Agent arc. Please R&R.

1. Chapter 1

****A/N:**** This is Basically a Bleach x MCU fanfic, just like its predecessor, but I couldn't find any such categories. Anyway..so, Uryu Ishida is in New York, investigating things on Urahara's request. What will he find? Who is behind all that has happened since? Read to know and don't forget to review.**

****Beta Courtesy: MusingAir *Applause****

* * *

><p>Dwellers of Dual Life

Place: Midtown High School Campus, Queens, New York

Time: 22 Dec 2013 3:10 pm Eastern Seaboard Time

"Hey Ishida!"

Uryu Ishida turned a page of his book, without looking back, "Hello there."

"Am I barging in on something?"

"Not at all.." _'you're a welcome interruption.. to say the least..'_
Uryu finally looked back at his classmate, "so.. how's it going, Parker?"

"All good. And you may call me Pete, I told you before."

"Oh, I am sorry. It is only not common to address people by their first name in Japan. Please don't mind it. Habits die hard, I guess."

Peter Parker smiled. "I bet it does. So I was asking, will you be free tomorrow evening? I am having trouble with the last chapter that Mr. Owen taught. It'd be great if we could have a group study session."

"Who's 'we'?"

"You, me, Gwen, Harry, probably Joe too; at Harry's."

"Quite the crowd..where again?"

"At Harry's house."

"Sure." The quincy fixed his glasses, "Give me the address. And by no means I can stay after 10."

"Works for me. And don't worry about address. Harry will pick us up from school."

Uryu smiled apologetically. "I have to attend a place before I join you guys after school. So I'd rather meet you there directly. Just give me the address."

"Well..whatever suits you.." Peter found it wise to give up.

"I'm surprised..I thought you won't have much difficulty with study, given the all nighters you pull." Uryu remarked as Peter started walking. His feet came to a halt at the comment.

"Eh.. have to spare some time after my job, you see, working as a freelance photographer ain't easy.." Peter turned back with an uneasy smile, "but how did you know I stay up?"

"Oh..it's only the dark circles under your eyes. I'd say you're staying up for 2 or 3 nights in a row. Chasing the masked wall-crawler?"

"Gotta eat. See you."

A smile appeared on Uryu's face as he watched the boy moving away. _'Typical good student. But I wonder what he, of all people, may have to hide from others.'_ His smile faded away as his brows formed a furrow.

_ 'Sheesh .. how did I get into this?' _

* * *

><p>"Remind me once more, Kisuke, why would I be willing to clean up Soul Society's mess?"<p>

The shopkeeper gave a goofy smile under his hat.

"My my, Ishida-san, don't make it sound so bad. You're going to get a graduation certificate from a high school in USA. How many of your

classmates are getting the chance?"

"Cut the crap. I don't see any reason why I should associate myself with Shinigamis' business. You seem to forget they are my enemies."

"But think about your academic career.."

Uryu now cocked his head. "I thought you knew better than to try to persuade me with such lame arguments."

"Okay, I'll give you two very good reasons. Firstly, do you know how this 'mess' as you call it started?"

"Do I look like I care?"

"You should. It's all about a century-old quincy artifact called Baetylus."

"The stone of God."

Urahara was a little astonished. "You know about it?"

"Not really. I saw it mentioned once in my grandfather's journal. That's all."

"Interesting." Urahara murmured. "Anyway..so who knows, you might get to know a thing or two about your lineage."

"So basically a wild goose chase. What's your second reason?"

"Um..that you get to live away from your father!" The shop-keeper chirped with v-signs on both hands.

"Hilarious."

"No Uryu, I'm serious. NY is in a terrible situation, swarmed with hollows." Kisuke sounded solemn, "innocent lives are at stake. The soul reapers are not intervening only because they would make it worse. You can help them. Would it not be enough reason?"

Uryu sighed. "I guess it would."

"That's it! So here's your visa and tickets, and you'll be taking tomorrow morning's flight. Chop chop!"

"Did you even consider the fact that I may refuse?" This guy gets on the nerves, really.

"Actually, no. Ryuken also assured me that you'll say yes, after some unnecessary ado. But honestly, I expected more resistance."

"Screw you. Now I get why Kurosaki is so mad with you."

"Listen Ishida-san. Soul Society does not intend to stir things up any further. They don't want another brawl with humans. That's the reason why you're going in as a normal human, via legal way. When you reach New York, lay low as a high school student that you are. The turf is not easy. Spilling information is bad for business, you get

it?"

"Soul Society screwed up big time, it seems to me."

"Another thing. If you see anything weird, even by our standards, you'll let me know. I am not your authority there, you are free to do whatever you deem right, but just let me know. That's all I ask."

"I understand. Keep an eye on Kurosaki." Uryu started walking. He had some packing to do.

* * *

><p>Place: Triskelion , Washington D.C.

"Coulson."

"Some assignment you gave me there, boss."

Fury now looked at his most trusted agent. "What do you have?"

Coulson handed Fury a folder.

"Dr. Yohann Vladimir Asimov, born in Frankfurt, former East Germany. Son to a Russian father and German mother, received higher education at Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. Was one of the foremost theoretical physicists two decades ago, aided in several experiments and projects under Soviet Military supervision until something went wrong. An accident during one of his experiments caused his decommission in '79. I do not have any details of what actually took place, but subsequently he started talking about aliens and trans-dimensionals. This cost him of his credibility in the scientific community. Since '92, he hasn't been seen or heard until now. As for the Widow's prey, so to speak, we identified him as Fredrick Schultz, former mercenary, neo-nazist. Upto this is ok. But he went AWOL 10 years ago and remained so until recent. And he also was never affiliated to AIM."

"No contracts or past transactions?"

"Nope. AIM has no contracts, no monetary transactions with him. Even his name is not in any files. Nothing indicates why he should be there on that night at all."

"Ok, what about the stone?"

"AIM database is mum about that. All files on this particular project seem to have been destroyed. Hence I checked at a secondary source. I got permission from Langley to interrogate the professor. I don't know how reliable he is, but he was the only hope of getting any information."

"And.. what did he have to say?"

Coulson took out a pen-drive out of his pocket. "Our sessions are recorded in there. The bottom-line is, the origin is unknown. It came into the light at the time of 1st World War only. During the 2nd World War, the Nazi Paranormal Research and Occult Society tried to use it for creating advanced troops."

"Super Soldiers?"

"Probably. That stone's got some mojo, and they knew it back then. They tried some kind of experiment result of which is unknown. After 1945, it was lost again. And so it remained, until recently."

Fury raised his hand in a stopping gesture. "Hold on. How did the professor out of all people know this much?"

A smile appeared on Coulson's lips. "I asked him the same thing. He said he came to know about this from the other guy. It was him who actually came up with the stone as well as the plan, and our good doctor was made head of the project. Dr. Asimov read the most of it from the file that was made while authorizing the project. The rest, he got out of the guy on different occasions."

"But you said earlier you found no files!" Fury interjected.

"Yes. Someone's covering his track neatly."

"But what's the point of this very elaborate hide-and-seek?"

"About that.." Coulson leaned forward. "Another thing the professor spilled when they used the truth serum. He said the project wasn't one of AIM's own. It was on the insistence of a benefactor."

Fury sighed a bit. _'What were those monkeys at CIA thinking?_' "Did he say who?" he asked.

"No." Coulson sighed. " 'The only thing assuring my security is the walls of Langley, Virginia and the only way to keep it is to not spill all the beans right now.' were his exact words. He is probably trying to strike a deal with CIA. Though I believe it's a bluff. He doesn't know anything more."

Fury's face contorted into a thoughtful expression. "So what do you think?" Coulson asked.

"I think what you think. Someone was backing our AIM up for something big. Now, I want you to look into this."

"Karakura?" Coulson looked at his superior, astonished. " I've never heard of this place before."

"Go check it out. I bet you'll find it worth your time."

Fury leaned back in his chair as his trusted agent left the room. He closed his remaining eye as his mind went over the incidents of November.

_ 'What did we miss?' _

* * *

><p>Present day..

Place: Queens, New York

Time: 22 Dec 2013 12:10 am Eastern Seaboard Time

Chilling gusts of air hit on Uryu's face, as he knelt down to replace the GintÅ• tubes which were full of reishi now. Now he inserted four new silver tubes in the vacancies.

The quincy sighed a bit as he finished his duty for the day. On the second day of his arrival, the 12th Division researchers showed up and set up these reishi absorbers at strategic points of the city. All of them were rooftops of skyscrapers. Ishida expected the eccentric captain, but it was the laconic lieutenant who showed up for demo instead.

His job is simple. The absorbers resembling normal dish antennae stored the reishi in GintÅ• tubes. He was to change them once a day. In addition, he was charged with patrolling the city and exterminating any and every hollow that showed up. That was his regular chore, until the situation became normal.

"Mayuri-sama has a message for you." The lieutenant said before leaving. "There are certain entities in this sector that normally don't concern our work directly, but they hold authoritative position. So if you were to get compromised, my captain would come personally to extract your vocal chords before you spill any information."

"Yeah..sounds so like him." Uryu had retorted. "Take care of yourself."

First few days were terrible. Ishida barely had any sleep and had to work day and night. The city was thick with hollows. Especially as the special reinforcements from Seireitei cleared out at his arrival, all workload fell on his shoulder. He didn't even get to enrol to his new classes until 5 days had passed and situation had improved enough. After all, he couldn't just suddenly run out of class to kill some hollow just like that any more, could he?

The night-view of New York was as charming as ever. The lights gleamed all over the snow covered landscape. A fine snow had started to fall now. From his perch on the Daily Bugle office building Ishida surveyed his surroundings as his senses twitched.

Someone was approaching his position. It was not a normal human, could not be, despite its meagre reiatsu. All around him was merely a jungle of rooftops, hence whoever it is, is no ordinary human.

Uryu considered his situation. He is now sitting atop the giant hording and wouldn't be seen easily; that is unless the newcomer is actually looking for him and knew where to look. If that's the case, the cover is hardly enough. A confrontation would be inevitable, and things could escalate.

The mysterious guest is now somewhat 200 meters away. Now Uryu felt another presence.

A hollow. It had appeared a kilometre or so far from him.

With a grunt of dissatisfaction, the quincy jumped off from the rooftop.

'See you another night.'

****To Be Continued...****

2. Chapter 2

****Ok, there you go. Here comes the 2nd chapter. Show the textbox below some love, in other words don't leave it empty. Leave your comments and queries, suggestions as well. Feel free to criticise so I may do better, and no need to hold back while doing it.****

****The beta is done by MusingAir; and I own neither Bleach nor the Avengers (as if it wasn't pretty damn obvious). So, enjoy!****

****Oh and thanks for the reviews and favs and follows, guys. You've been a real inspiration.****

*** * ***

<p>Karakura Chronicles

Place: Midtown High School Campus, Queens, New York

Time: 23 Dec 2013 2:11 pm Eastern Seaboard Time

"And, with this, we conclude today's lesson. The next time we meet will be next year, so, I wish you all merry Christmas and a happy new year. And most importantly, stay safe, everybody."

Safety was a concern indeed. In last month, nine people have been hospitalized with so-called 'animal attacks' and other kinds of mysterious injuries. Though there has been no casualty yet, people are scared. The police were at a loss; the attacks were random from every aspect and only an animal no smaller than a Siberian tiger could leave such chomp-marks.

Raymond Warren was a genius compared to Ochi-sensei, thought Ishida. He often wondered how she managed to keep her job with her qualification, and the answer he came up with was because nobody with a good career ahead would want to forfeit it by teaching in a small high school in a Tokyo suburb for their life, hence Ms. Ochi.

He waited 5 minutes for most of the class rush out. Then he got up and made for the door.

In the locker room, Flash Thompson had Peter Parker up against his locker. "Hey Pete, you nerdy little.." He stopped as he saw Uryu approach. "Lucky you, Parker." Mumbling this and giving the boy's neck a good shake, the football star hurried away.

Uryu didn't look at the retreating bully, he only nodded slightly to the "thanks" from Parker, and opened his locker door. He worked on building a distant and forbidding attitude towards everyone. He realized how similar he was acting to Ichigo, which made him smirk a little.

As for most of his classmates, they took him for Japanese version of Hannibal Lecter.

*** * ***

><p>15 days ago..

"Class, I'd like you to meet Mr. Uryu Ishida. Mr. Ishida is part of our foreign student exchange program from Japan and will be joining your class from today." With this, the teacher patted the new boy on his back, saying 'suit yourself' non-verbally, and left the room.

Flash Thompson watched the newbie go and sit on the 3rd row. A scrawny, pale, perpetual geek of an Asian, dressed in white, with weird hairstyle and nerd-like glasses. _'This is gonna be fun.'_ He thought.

*****HEY SHRIMP!***** His voice rang through the locker room as he walked up to the newbie.

Uryu closed the locker door.

"You hear me, shrimp?"

"Loud and clear, moose."

"You think you're funny, nerd?"

"Why, of course not.." Uryu settled his glasses on the bridge of his nose, "That was a pathetic excuse of a joke, especially compared to you."

"Ok smart-ass, that's it." Flash bellowed and rushed in for a tackle.

A swift spin of ankle, Flash Thompson whizzed past Uryu, who now put his hair aside. "I knew a certain person called Yammy, who would have probably shouted out "Ole!" by now." He retorted.

Flash threw a left hook, followed by a vicious jab; both were dodged. The haymaker was parried, and a swift kick on left foot threw Flash off-balance.

A gentle knock, Flash bit dirt on the floor, well whatever was there. A good many number of students had gathered around, who now laughed freely at the bully's expense.

"Why you little.. you dare insult me in front of them, you Asian son of a bitch?!" Flash roared.

Something snapped. The new student lifted the athlete by his face, slammed his head to the wall and then the lockers, and then threw on the floor. Now he walked up to him and put a foot on his chest.

"For your own good, Mr. Thomson, I suggest you refrain from insulting others, especially about their lineage. I'd like to let you know that only reason you are not going to hospital today is the trophies you have given your school. I concur that a loss of a good athlete would be most unfortunate for this institution, hence I will rather not be the reason for it."

The crowd divided in two rows as Uryu turned back. The students were awe-struck, afraid. But among them, an aura drew Uryu's attention. A

reiatsu stood out from the crowd, emanating a vibe, alert and suspicious, full of curiosity.

2 minutes later when he materialized the spirit ribbons in the empty library, it had melted off. Uryu couldn't distinguish it among minimal reiatsus of all the students.

The quincy grunted a little.

* * *

><p>Present Day..

Place: Triskelion, Washington D.C.

Phil Coulson sat silently, his hands folded, supporting his chin. Fury waited for some time, but finally his patience ran out.

"Well, you're gonna sit there like I'm some painter drawing your portrait?"

Coulson lowered his hands. "Director, I paid a visit to Karakura Town as you asked me to. And I can't say I like the things there. Not one bit."

"What did you find out?"

"Well, at least 2000 people were systematically wiped off the face of the Earth. And our friends took very good care that nobody finds that out. They went as far as substituting people's memory of them."

"Tell me what you found out." Fury walked up to the coffee machine. "In detail."

* * *

><p>Coulson's POV:

"So Ma'am, your son..died of an accident, on September 3rd, 2012?" Phil Coulson looked up from the dossier, at the elderly woman in front.

"Yes. However, I'd rather not try to recall that day, Coulson-san." The woman wiped off a tear from her eyes.

Phil Coulson tried his best to sound sympathetic. "I'm so sorry for causing you pain. What happened to your son was most unfortunate. We'll see that justice is done. Arigatou gozaimasu, Sugimura-san, for your co-operation and I apologize again for making you relive such painful memories."

After crossing the threshold of Sugimura residence, Coulson looked at the neighbouring houses. Poor Mrs. Sugimura told him that her son died in a hit-and-run. According to Uremashi family's attorney, they all died of Encephalitis, 3 months before. The Yamanakas died in a plane crash in 2003, according to Mr. and Mrs. Higuchi. They lost their daughter in cancer 2 years back. Shizuka Hirano disappeared while on a skiing trip to Hokkaido 5 years ago, along with 6 of her friends. Her parents showed him her kindergarten books. They couldn't

let it go, yet.

Coulson smelled something odd. Buddha had sent a mourning mother to bring some grains from a house where death has not entered; so he could revive her son. The mother found none. 26 year old Okamoto Rikka told this to him, while looking at her father's picture, who died 13 months ago of heart-attack, on his way to office.

Still that wouldn't explain why this street, the previous one, the one before that, the 6 other between that and the park were so favoured by death. 50% of the houses had one or more member deceased in last 10 years. Most of the other houses were empty. Their inhabitants moved away to Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Hawaii, to the states in some cases.

Some houses have new tenants. Young couples, some with a kid, bustling with life. But the streets were lonely. In a place or two, flowers were in bottles, put at the foot of the lamp-posts, marking an accident. Park benches were mostly empty.

Shadow of death hung over the area.

* * *

><p>"I have checked. The Hiroshi family, the Yashidas, or the Surutas- none of them ever made to US. There is not a single family from Karakura Town who has moved to Kyoto either. I have looked into all govt. reports. People are vanishing into thin air, Director. People of this 1-mile radius area have been cleared off the records systematically,. And that's not the fearsome part. They are modifying the memories of the people. The families, friends, neighbours have a concocted memory of what happened to one."<p>

"Oh yeah?" Fury sat up in his chair, "how can that happen? And how did you find out?"

Coulson pulled out a file from his folder. "Souichiro Yamanaka, Yumiko Yamanaka. They supposedly were on the ill-fated Boeing 914 bound for Hawaii and thus met their end in May 2003. And here I am sitting with passenger list of that flight, showing me that they never made it to the airport in time, got the next available flight and returned home safely wearing flower writhes." He laid two other documents on the table. "With Stark's system, we might even be able track credit card transactions in their names, if they have not been wiped off from the system already."

"Puts trust issues on your informants." Fury commented. "And reliability and competence of local authorities."

"Besides the fact that they totally lack any reason, they were not lying." Coulson replied. "I would have seen through in that case. No pupil dilation, no signs. They were just ordinary civilians, answering to the best of their knowledge. Now I ask you this, Director, what caught your eyes about the town in the first place?"

Fury put his coffee-cup down. "Dr. Banner brought this to my notice. He showed me a footage of a wrecked town that was rebuilt overnight. Then I pulled some records, to find out that there have been a lot of anomalous incidents in that location. Unexplained property damage,

weird explosions. And, when we tried to locate that crystal thing, we traced a few similar weird readings all over the world. This is one of them."

"You mean there are others?"

"That" Fury got up, "is your job to find out. I have a new mission for you."

"Where is it this time?"

"Dresden."

* * *

><p>Place: Osborn Residence

Time: 23 Dec 2013 7:15 pm Eastern Seaboard Time

Uryu was greeted by the butler as he made his way into the lavish apartment.

Peter Parker's face appeared on the landing, followed by Harry.

"Good evening, Parker, Osborn."

"Eh..Good Evening, Uryu." Harry wasn't evidently used to such formal greetings, "Come in."

Uryu followed them into a large room which definitely belonged to Harry. Tons of comic books stashed in the bookshelf, a 70 inch plasma widescreen TV, two gaming consoles rolling on the bed. On the couch were seated Gwen Stacy and Joe Kernighan.

"Huh..look what the cat dragged in. I wasn't sure you'd come." Kernighan greeted with his characteristic nonchalance.

"Oh..Peter mentioned a 'maybe' before your name too, while mentioning the list of invited." Uryu smirked while setting his glasses on the bridge of his nose.

"I'm just kidding..coz you're kinda aloof in class."

'_Seriously..I hate realizing how alike Kurosaki and I act to others now._' Uryu thought to himself.

"My father wanted to meet you guys." Harry informed.

"Well..he likes to keep a tab on his son's friend circle." Peter whispered to Uryu and Joe's ears. "Don't take it personally. Mr. Osborn is a nice guy."

_ 'Not very unlike my own father.' _ Uryu thought.

Norman Osborn has a tall stout figure, giving him a commanding look. He shook hands warmly with everyone.

"I appreciate you guys helping my son with studies. He is lucky to have friends like you."

"Oh please Mr. Osborn," Uryu said with a smile, "there is as much benefit for us as for Harry in this. We are not doing it entirely out of good will."

"Sure. A group effort often yields better result for everyone." Norman looked at Uryu.

"Dad, meet Uryu. He's the new transfer student." Harry added uncomfortably.

"Nice to meet you, everybody. Now if will excuse me. Please continue with your studies."

"You made a good call. He thinks we are his son's personal tutors or something." Joe whispered at Uryu's ear.

Uryu nodded slightly. He could feel the abnormal reiatsu of Joe. He has been familiarized with it in the past weeks. Still he couldn't help being on guard around this guy.

* * *

><p>Inspector Marvin took his cap off. "OK, what in God's name is this?"<p>

What stood in front of him was an ATM with its front pried open and the cash taken out. It was not what surprised him. It was how it was broken. The broken jagged edges bore the marks of one's fingers on both side.

"The CCTV footage confirms it." Inspector Jeff went towards his partner. "The guy pried it open with bare hands."

The shop-keeper was verging on hysteria, "SEE? I'M NOT ON CRACKS! am I?"

Edward Brock Jr. took a quick snap. Time for a close-up now.

To Be Continued...

End
file.